a transfer plate disposed between the manifold and the nozzle units, said nozzle units being secured to said transfer plate,

supply passaging in the transfer plate for the delivery of material from the manifold supply ports to said nozzle units, said supply passaging comprising a **first** elongate supply channel in a first face of the transfer plate in fluid communication with said first supply port in the manifold, and a **second** elongate supply channel in said first face of the transfer plate in fluid communication with said second supply port in the manifold, said first and second supply channels extending in said direction of alignment and being located one above the other in stacked relation; and

a mounting system for mounting said transfer plate on the manifold, said mounting system allowing adjustment of the position of the transfer plate and nozzle units thereon relative to the manifold in said direction of alignment, said manifold supply ports remaining in fluid communication with respective supply channels during said adjustment.

The first and second elongate supply channels (SC1, SC2) are part of the supply passaging in the transfer plate (TP1, TP2). The first elongate supply channel (SC1) is in fluid communication with a first supply port (SP1) in the manifold (159) to supply material to the nozzles, and the second elongate supply channel (SC2) is in fluid communication with a second supply port (SP2) in the manifold to supply material to the nozzles. *See e.g.*, Figs. 12 and 14. The two supply channels (SC1, SC2) are located one above the other in stacked relation.

Claim 1 is submitted to be unanticipated by and patentable over the references of record, and in particular European Patent Application No. EP 0 719 591 (Rochmann et al.) and U.S. Patent

No. 5,265,800 (Ziecker et al.), in that whether considered alone or in combination, the references fail to show or suggest 1) a manifold having **first** and **second** supply ports **located one above the other** for supply of material to the nozzle units and 2) a **first** elongate supply channel in a first face of a transfer plate in fluid communication with a first supply port in the manifold, and a **second** elongate supply channel in the first face of the transfer plate in fluid communication with a second supply port in the manifold.

Applicants respectfully note that the Office action merely takes the position that each of the cited references discloses all of the elements recited in claim 1, repeating the claim language generally word-for-word, but fails to set forth with any specificity whatsoever as to which elements of each cited reference the Office deems as corresponding to the elements recited in claim 1. It is therefore difficult for applicants to determine what the Office's position actually is. Applicants have therefore tried, as best understood, to address the Office's rejections. However, in the event the Office maintains any of its rejections, applicants respectfully request that the Examiner identify which elements of each cited reference it views as corresponding to each of the elements recited in the rejected claims.

1. Rochmann et al.

Rochmann et al. disclose an adhesive spray apparatus (10) that includes a manifold (14), an intermediate transition plate (16), and a pair of transversely spaced spray gun modules (18A, 18B). Figure 6 of Rochmann et al. illustrates the manifold (14) as having a molten adhesive supply passage (30) and a pressurized air supply passage (31) for delivering molten

adhesive and pressurized air, respectively, to the transition plate (16) and spray gun modules (18A, 18B). *See* column 5, lines 3-9. The transition plate (16) includes a molten adhesive passageway (34) in communication with adhesive supply passage (30) and a pressurized air passageway (35) in communication with pressurized air supply passage (31). *See* column 5, lines 10-16. The transition plate (16) also includes another air passageway (40) extending from upper surface (42). *See* column 5, lines 21-22.

While Rochmann et al. do disclose first and second nozzle units (e.g., spray gun modules 18A, 18B), the reference fails to disclose or even suggest that the manifold (14) has first and second material supply ports located one above the other. Rather, Rochmann et al. disclose the manifold (14) as having only one adhesive passageway (30). It is difficult to determine from the drawings and the disclosure of Rochmann et al. whether there is one adhesive passageway (30) that communicates with both of the spray gun modules 18A, 18B, or there are two separate passageways (30), one for each of the spray gun modules 18A, 18B. In the first instance, having only one passageway (30) that services both spray gun modules would mean that Rochmann et al. doesn't even disclose first and second material supply ports in the manifold as recited in claim 1.

Even if Rochmann et al. do disclose separate adhesive supply passageways (30) in the manifold (14), e.g., one leading to each respective spray gun module 18A, 18B, Rochmann et al. still fail to disclose that these two adhesive supply passageways are positioned one above the other as recited in claim 1. There are not other adhesive supply passageways disclosed by Rochmann et al. in the manifold, nor is there any

suggestion to align separate adhesive supply passageways in the manifold one above the other.

Moreover, Rochmann et al. fail to show or suggest a first elongate supply channel in a first face of a transfer plate and a second elongate supply channel in the first face of the transfer plate being located one above the other in stacked relation. Instead, Rochmann et al. teach the transition plate (16) as having only **one** molten adhesive passageway (34). Again, it difficult to discern whether the one passageway disclosed by Rochmann et al. is common to both spray gun modules or there are two passageways (34), one for each spray gun module. Even if these are two separate passageways, they are clearly not located one above the other in stacked relationship as recited in claim 1.

2. Ziecker et al.

Ziecker et al. disclose an adhesive spray apparatus (10) constructed similar to Rochmann et al. As best illustrated in Fig. 7, the adhesive spray apparatus includes a service block manifold (14), a transition plate (16) attached to the manifold, and spray gun modules (18). The manifold (14) has a single molten adhesive supply passage (20) in communication with a single molten adhesive supply passageway (24) in the transition plate (16). *See* column 4, lines 17-30. The transition plate has an upper air passageway (40) for delivery of pressurized air. A separate manifold (156) is disposed below the transition plate (16) and has a pressurized air passageway (155) connected to a source of pressurized air. As disclosed and illustrated in Fig. 7, the manifold (14) only includes the one molten adhesive supply passage (20), and the transition plate (16) includes only

the one molten adhesive passageway (24) disposed below the air passageway (40).

Ziecker et al. disclose no more than Rochmann et al. In particular, Ziecker et al. fail to disclose or even suggest that the manifold (14) has first and second material supply ports located one above the other. Rather, Ziecker et al. disclose the manifold (14) as having only one adhesive passageway (20). It is difficult to determine from the drawings and the disclosure of Ziecker et al. whether there is one single adhesive supply passageway (30) that communicates with all of the spray gun modules 18, or there are separate adhesive supply passageways, one for each of the spray gun modules. In the first instance, having only one passageway (20) that services all of the spray gun modules would mean that Ziecker et al. doesn't even disclose first and second material supply ports in the manifold as recited in claim 1.

Even if Ziecker et al. does disclose separate adhesive supply passageways (20) in the manifold (14), e.g., one leading to each respective spray gun module 18, Ziecker et al. still fail to disclose that these separate adhesive supply passageways are positioned one above the other as recited in claim 1. There are no other adhesive supply passageways disclosed by Ziecker et al., nor is there any suggestion to align separate adhesive supply passageways in the manifold one above the other.

Moreover, as in Rochmann et al., Ziecker et al. fail to show or suggest a first elongate supply channel in a first face of a transfer plate and a second elongate supply channel in the first face of the transfer plate being located one above the other in stacked relation. Instead, Ziecker et al. teach the transition plate (16) as having only **one** molten adhesive passageway (24). Again, it difficult to discern whether the one

passageway disclosed by Ziecker et al. is common to each of the spray gun modules or there are multiple passageways (34), one for each spray gun module. Even if these are separate adhesive supply passageways, they are clearly not located one above the other in stacked relationship as recited in claim 1.

The other references of record similarly fail to show or suggest all of the elements of claim 1.

For these reasons, claim 1 is submitted to be unanticipated by and patentable over the references of record.

Claims 2-12 depend either directly or indirectly from claim 1 and are submitted to be patentable over the references of record for at least the same reasons as claim 1.

Conclusion

In view of the foregoing, favorable consideration and allowance of claim 1-23 is respectfully requested.

Respectfully submitted,

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